

# Race and Hispanic Origin of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2007

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## INTRODUCTION

This report describes the race and Hispanic-origin composition of the foreign-born population in the United States in 2007 and compares it to that of the total and native-born populations.<sup>1</sup> It

<sup>1</sup> The terms native and native born are used interchangeably in this report.

shows that the foreign born have a pattern of race and Hispanic origin reporting that is markedly different from the native population.

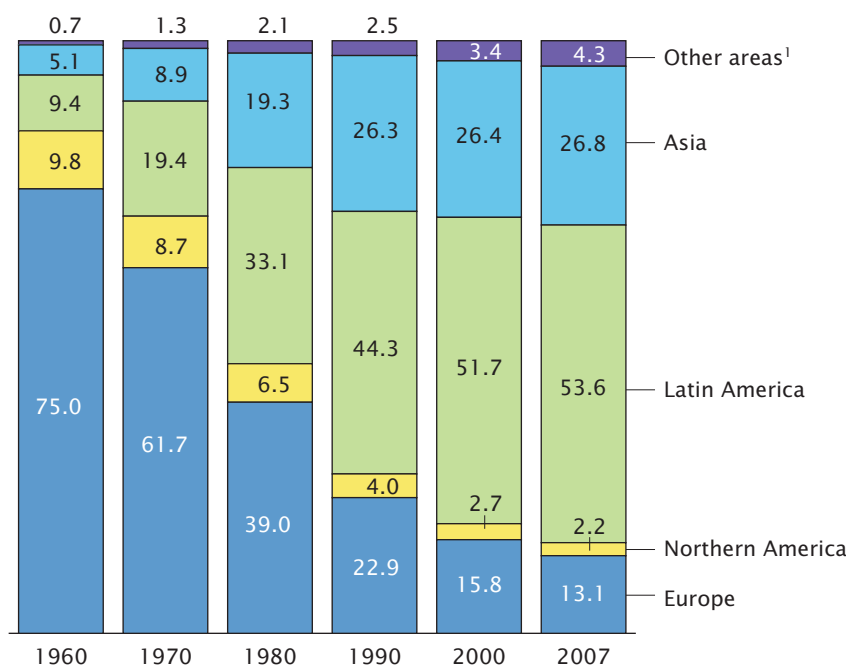
New waves of immigrants began arriving in the United States following amendments to the Immigration Act in 1965 that abolished the national origins quota

By  
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Figure 1.

### Percent Distribution of Foreign-Born Population by Region of Birth: 1960 to 2007

(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



<sup>1</sup> Other areas include Africa and Oceania.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population, 1960 to 2000, and 2007 American Community Survey.

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system, resulting in a shift away from traditional source countries to a greater diversity in the origins of the foreign born. Unlike during the great migration of the late 1800s and early 1900s when the majority of immigrants to the United States came from countries in Europe, most of the immigrants who arrived after 1970 were from countries in Latin America and Asia. This change is clearly reflected in the foreign-born population through time. In 1960, 75 percent of the foreign-born population were born in Europe. In 1980, 39 percent were born in Europe, while 52 percent were born in Latin America or Asia.<sup>2</sup> By 2007, 80 percent of the foreign-born population were born in either Latin America or Asia (Figure 1).

Over the last 40 years, immigration from Latin American and Asia has been the major force changing the racial and ethnic composition of the American population. The influx of newcomers from these regions has resulted in rapid growth in the number of Hispanics and Asians in recent decades. For the three groups with the oldest historical roots in the United States—non-Hispanic Whites, non-Hispanic Blacks, and American Indian and Alaska Natives—natural increase, not immigration, has been the main source of growth since 1970. The shift in immigrant source countries, combined with modest differences in natural increase among the different race and Hispanic-origin

<sup>2</sup> Gibson, Campbell and Kay Jung. 2006. "Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-Born Population of the United States: 1850 to 2000." U.S. Census Bureau: Population Division Working Paper, Number 81. Available on the U.S. Census Bureau's Web site at <[www.census.gov/population/www/techpap.html](http://www.census.gov/population/www/techpap.html)>.

### Defining Nativity: Who Is Foreign Born?

Nativity refers to whether a person is native or foreign born. The native-born population includes anyone who was a U.S. citizen or U.S. national at birth. Respondents who were born in the United States, Puerto Rico, a U.S. Island Area (U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), or abroad of a U.S. citizen parent or parents, are defined as native. The foreign-born population includes anyone who was not a U.S. citizen or U.S. national at birth. Respondents who are not U.S. citizens as well as those who have become U.S. citizens through naturalization are considered foreign born.

groups, has resulted in increased racial and ethnic diversity, which is reflected in the decreasing proportion of non-Hispanic Whites through time.<sup>3</sup> The proportion of the total population that was White, not Hispanic was 83 percent in 1970 and 76 percent in 1990. By 2007, 66 percent of the total population was White, not Hispanic.<sup>4</sup>

The foreign born, through their own diverse origins, will continue to contribute to the racial and ethnic diversity of the United States. How they translate their own backgrounds and report their adopted identities have important implications for the nation's racial and ethnic composition. This report discusses the race and Hispanic origin of the foreign born, first separately as distinct concepts, then combined to highlight the unique racial and ethnic patterns reported by this population. Race

<sup>3</sup> Perez, Anthony Daniel and Charles Hirschman. 2009. "The Changing Racial and Ethnic Composition of the U.S. Population: Emerging American Identities." *Population and Development Review*, 35:1-51.

<sup>4</sup> According to the American Community Survey, in 2007 the proportion of the total population that was White alone, not Hispanic was 66 percent while the proportion that was White alone or in combination with one or more other race groups, not Hispanic was 67 percent.

by the largest countries of birth and detailed Hispanic origin by nativity are also discussed. The proportion of foreign born in each race group and detailed Hispanic origin is also shown. Unless otherwise stated, the information presented in this report is based on data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau in the 2007 American Community Survey (ACS).<sup>5</sup>

### People in each race group can be either Hispanic or not Hispanic, and Hispanics may be any race.

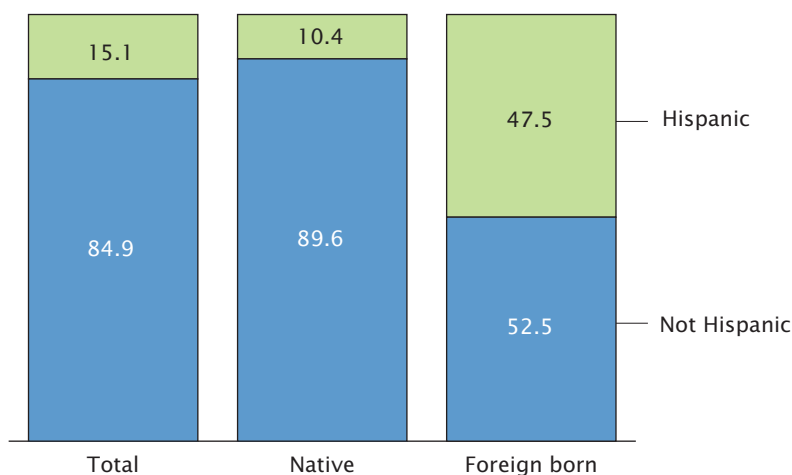
Race and Hispanic origin are treated as separate concepts in the federal statistical system. The ACS asks both a race and Hispanic-origin question. The question on race asks respondents to report the race or races they consider themselves to be. The question on Hispanic origin asks respondents if they are Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino. Both questions are based on self-identification. See Appendixes A and B for additional information about race and Hispanic origin in the ACS.

<sup>5</sup> This report includes data for the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Figure 2.

### Percent Distribution of Population by Hispanic Origin and Nativity: 2007

(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey.

Hispanics composed 6 percent of the total population.

### The pattern of races reported by the foreign born is notably different from that of natives.

While the majority of both the native and foreign-born populations reported only one race, the distribution of races reported differed (Table 1). The foreign born were more likely than the native born to report Asian and Some Other Race, but were less likely to report White, Black, and Two or More Races.<sup>7</sup> Most natives were White (78 percent), followed by Black (13 percent). By comparison, most of the foreign born were White (46 percent), Asian (23 percent), and Some Other Race (21 percent). The native born were more likely to report more than one race than the foreign born. Approximately 2.3 percent of the native born and 1.3 percent of the foreign born reported two or more races.

## FINDINGS

### Nearly half of all foreign born in the United States are Hispanic.

In 2007, the total population of the United States was 301.6 million, which included 38.1 million foreign born, representing 12.6 percent of the total population.

Approximately 15 percent of the total population reported

a Hispanic origin. However, 10 percent of the native-born population were Hispanic compared with 48 percent of the foreign-born population (Figure 2).<sup>6</sup> Foreign-born

<sup>6</sup> The estimates in this report are based on responses from a sample of the population. As with all surveys, estimates may vary from the actual values because of sampling variation or other factors. All comparative statements have undergone statistical testing and are significant at the 90 percent confidence level unless otherwise noted. The margins of error for key estimates are provided in Appendix Tables 1, 2, and 3.

<sup>7</sup> The terms White, Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and Some Other Race are used here to refer to people who reported one race only. The term Two or More Races is used to refer to people who reported more than one race. The use of six single-race populations and one multiple-race population in this report does not imply that this is the preferred method of presenting or analyzing data. The Census Bureau uses a variety of approaches.

Table 1.

**Population by Nativity, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 2007**

(Numbers in thousands. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))

Hispanic origin and race	Total		Native		Foreign born	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>301,621</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>263,561</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>38,060</b>	<b>100.0</b>
One race .....	295,112	97.8	257,542	97.7	37,570	98.7
White .....	223,005	73.9	205,594	78.0	17,412	45.7
Black or African American .....	37,335	12.4	34,362	13.0	2,972	7.8
American Indian and Alaska Native .....	2,365	0.8	2,238	0.8	127	0.3
Asian .....	13,233	4.4	4,325	1.6	8,908	23.4
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander .....	435	0.1	329	0.1	106	0.3
Some Other Race .....	18,739	6.2	10,694	4.1	8,045	21.1
Two or More Races .....	6,509	2.2	6,020	2.3	489	1.3
<b>Not Hispanic</b> .....	<b>256,194</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>236,201</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>19,993</b>	<b>100.0</b>
One race .....	251,424	98.1	231,652	98.1	19,772	98.9
White .....	198,553	77.5	190,838	80.8	7,715	38.6
Black or African American .....	36,657	14.3	33,872	14.3	2,785	13.9
American Indian and Alaska Native .....	2,019	0.8	1,996	0.8	23	0.1
Asian .....	13,077	5.1	4,210	1.8	8,867	44.4
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander .....	402	0.2	306	0.1	96	0.5
Some Other Race .....	715	0.3	429	0.2	286	1.4
Two or More Races .....	4,769	1.9	4,549	1.9	221	1.1
<b>Hispanic</b> .....	<b>45,427</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>27,361</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>18,067</b>	<b>100.0</b>
One race .....	43,688	96.2	25,890	94.6	17,798	98.5
White .....	24,452	53.8	14,755	53.9	9,697	53.7
Black or African American .....	677	1.5	490	1.8	187	1.0
American Indian and Alaska Native .....	346	0.8	242	0.9	104	0.6
Asian .....	156	0.3	115	0.4	41	0.2
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander .....	33	0.1	23	0.1	10	0.1
Some Other Race .....	18,024	39.7	10,264	37.5	7,759	42.9
Two or More Races .....	1,740	3.8	1,471	5.4	269	1.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey.

**The majority of both native and foreign-born Hispanics are either White or Some Other Race, but native Hispanics are more likely to report more than one race.**

Among native-born Hispanics, 54 percent were White and 38 percent were Some Other Race. Among foreign-born Hispanics, 54 percent were White while 43 percent were Some Other Race.<sup>8</sup> Native Hispanics

were more likely to report Two or More Races (5.4 percent) than foreign-born Hispanics (1.5 percent).

Most of the non-Hispanic foreign born reported their race as either Asian (44 percent) or White (39 percent). By comparison, the majority of non-Hispanic natives were White (81 percent). Overall, both the non-Hispanic native and foreign-born populations were more likely to report Black than the Hispanic native and foreign-born populations.

**The majority of foreign born are White, Asian, or Some Other Race, but the pattern of race reporting varies by country-of-birth groups.**

About 9 out of 10 of the foreign born were White, Asian, or Some Other Race, but this pattern varies by different country-of-birth groups (Table 2). For example, most of the foreign born from Mexico and El Salvador reported either White or Some Other Race. Among the foreign born from Mexico, 53 percent were White and 45 percent were

<sup>8</sup> The estimates of the proportion of native and foreign-born Hispanics who were White are not statistically different.

Table 2.

**Foreign-Born Population by Race for Countries With 750,000 or More Foreign Born: 2007**

(Numbers in thousands. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))

Country of birth	Total	One race							Two or More Races
		Total	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Some Other Race	
<b>NUMBER</b>									
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>38,060</b>	<b>37,570</b>	<b>17,412</b>	<b>2,972</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>8,908</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>8,045</b>	<b>489</b>
Mexico .....	11,739	11,625	6,233	28	78	17	1	5,267	114
China <sup>1</sup> .....	1,930	1,921	22	2	—	1,896	1	1	9
Philippines .....	1,701	1,671	21	3	1	1,641	3	2	30
India .....	1,502	1,480	22	3	3	1,417	1	35	22
El Salvador .....	1,104	1,084	496	6	4	2	—	575	20
Vietnam .....	1,101	1,094	6	1	—	1,086	1	—	7
Korea <sup>2</sup> .....	1,043	1,031	10	3	—	1,018	1	—	11
Cuba .....	983	968	851	25	—	1	—	91	15
Canada .....	830	823	754	18	7	34	1	10	8
Dominican Republic ...	756	727	191	63	2	3	—	468	29
<b>PERCENT</b>									
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>100.0</b>	<b>98.7</b>	<b>45.7</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>1.3</b>
Mexico .....	100.0	99.0	53.1	0.2	0.7	0.1	—	44.9	1.0
China <sup>1</sup> .....	100.0	99.5	1.1	0.1	—	98.2	—	0.1	0.5
Philippines .....	100.0	98.2	1.3	0.2	—	96.5	0.2	0.1	1.8
India .....	100.0	98.6	1.4	0.2	0.2	94.4	—	2.4	1.4
El Salvador .....	100.0	98.2	44.9	0.6	0.4	0.2	—	52.1	1.8
Vietnam .....	100.0	99.4	0.5	0.1	—	98.6	0.1	—	0.6
Korea <sup>2</sup> .....	100.0	98.9	1.0	0.3	—	97.6	0.1	—	1.1
Cuba .....	100.0	98.4	86.6	2.5	—	0.1	—	9.2	1.6
Canada .....	100.0	99.1	90.8	2.1	0.8	4.1	0.1	1.2	0.9
Dominican Republic ...	100.0	96.2	25.3	8.3	0.3	0.4	—	61.9	3.8

Dash (—) represents zero or rounds to zero.

<sup>1</sup> Includes respondents who reported their county of birth as China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, or Paracel Islands.

<sup>2</sup> Includes respondents who reported their county of birth as Korea, South Korea, or North Korea.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey.

Some Other Race, while among the foreign born from El Salvador, 45 percent were White and over half (52 percent) were Some Other Race. By comparison, 87 percent of the foreign born from Cuba were White, with 9 percent Some Other Race. Among the foreign born from the Dominican Republic, 25 percent were White and 62 percent Some

Other Race, with 8 percent Black and 4 percent Two or More Races.

**Most of the Hispanics in the United States are of Mexican origin, regardless of nativity.**

Of the 45.4 million Hispanics in the United States, 64 percent were of Mexican origin (Table 3). Mexican represented the largest Hispanic

origin for both the native and foreign-born populations (both approximately 64 percent).

However, differences in the distribution of Hispanic origin by type are revealed when the population is divided by nativity. For example, among the native-born Hispanic population, 15 percent were Puerto

Table 3.

**Hispanic Population by Nativity and Type: 2007**

(Numbers in thousands. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))

Hispanic type	Total		Native		Foreign born	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>45,427</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>27,361</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>18,067</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Caribbean . . . . .	6,940	15.3	5,181	18.9	1,758	9.7
Cuban . . . . .	1,611	3.5	628	2.3	983	5.4
Dominican . . . . .	1,208	2.7	482	1.8	726	4.0
Puerto Rican . . . . .	4,120	9.1	4,071	14.9	49	0.3
Central American . . . . .	32,706	72.0	18,713	68.4	13,993	77.5
Costa Rican . . . . .	118	0.3	47	0.2	70	0.4
Guatemalan . . . . .	872	1.9	265	1.0	607	3.4
Honduran . . . . .	533	1.2	153	0.6	380	2.1
Mexican . . . . .	29,167	64.2	17,538	64.1	11,629	64.4
Nicaraguan . . . . .	302	0.7	100	0.4	202	1.1
Panamanian . . . . .	135	0.3	65	0.2	69	0.4
Salvadoran . . . . .	1,474	3.2	506	1.9	968	5.4
Other Central American . . . . .	106	0.2	39	0.1	67	0.4
South American . . . . .	2,499	5.5	761	2.8	1,738	9.6
Argentinean . . . . .	194	0.4	60	0.2	134	0.7
Bolivian . . . . .	83	0.2	29	0.1	54	0.3
Chilean . . . . .	107	0.2	37	0.1	69	0.4
Colombian . . . . .	799	1.8	243	0.9	555	3.1
Ecuadorian . . . . .	533	1.2	172	0.6	361	2.0
Peruvian . . . . .	462	1.0	125	0.5	336	1.9
Uruguayan . . . . .	50	0.1	13	—	38	0.2
Venezuelan . . . . .	178	0.4	49	0.2	129	0.7
Other South American . . . . .	93	0.2	33	0.1	60	0.3
All other Hispanic <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	3,283	7.2	2,705	9.9	577	3.2

Dash (-) represents zero or rounds to zero.

<sup>1</sup> Other Hispanic includes all other general Hispanic origin responses such as "Hispanic," "Spanish," or "Latino."

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey.

Rican, compared with less than 1 percent of the foreign-born Hispanic population. There are more native-born Puerto Rican Hispanics than foreign-born Puerto Rican Hispanics in part because individuals born in Puerto Rico are classified as natives of the United States. By comparison, foreign-born Hispanics were more likely than their native-born counterparts to report their origin as Cuban, Salvadoran, Dominican, Guatemalan,

Colombian, Ecuadorian, Honduran, and Peruvian.

**Over two-thirds of all respondents reporting Asian are foreign born.**

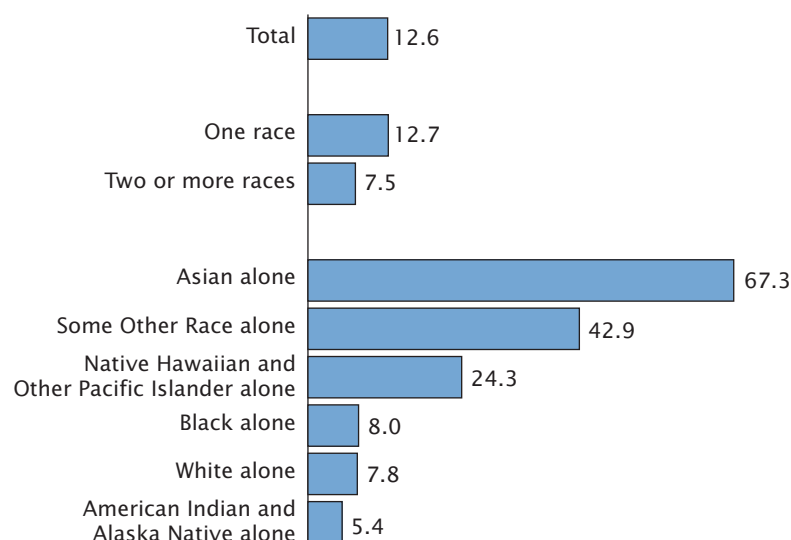
While 13 percent of the total population of the United States was foreign born in 2007, the proportion of the Asian race group that was foreign born was higher than the national average (Figure 3). Of the 13.2 million people in the Asian population, 67 percent were foreign

born. Two other race groups also had a higher proportion of foreign born than the total population. Forty-three percent of the 18.7 million people in the Some Other Race population were foreign born, as were 24 percent of the 435,000 people in the Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander population. By comparison, of the 2.4 million people who were American Indian and Alaska Native, only 5.4 percent were foreign born.

Figure 3.

### Percent Foreign Born by Race: 2007

(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey.

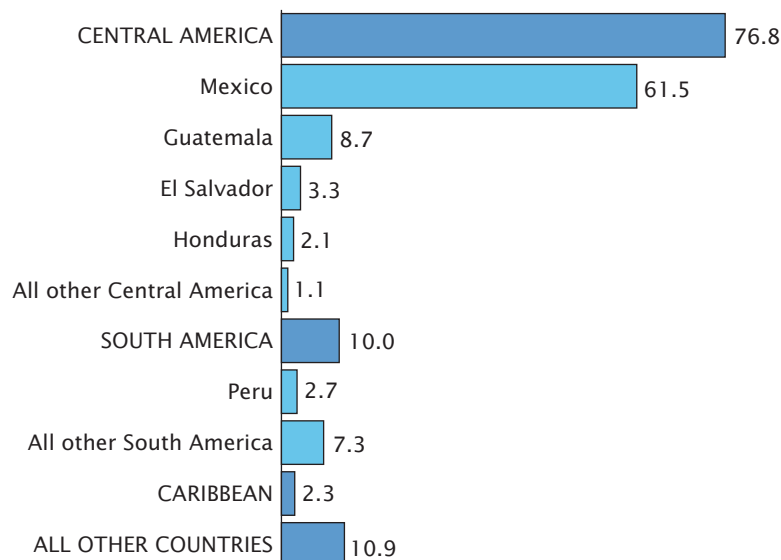
**Over half of all foreign-born Blacks came from countries in the Caribbean, and over one-third from countries in Africa.**

Of the 37.3 million Blacks in the United States, 3 million were foreign born, representing 8 percent of the total Black population. Of the foreign-born Black population, 54 percent were born in countries in the Caribbean, including Jamaica (19 percent), Haiti (17 percent), and Trinidad and Tobago (6 percent). An additional 34 percent were born in countries in Africa, including Nigeria (6 percent), Ethiopia (4 percent), and Ghana (3 percent). Approximately 5 percent were born in countries in South America, including Guyana (4 percent), and 4 percent in countries in Central America.<sup>9, 10</sup> Countries from the remaining regions of the world—Europe, Asia, Northern America, and Oceania—when combined represented about 3 percent of the Black foreign born.

Figure 4.

### Percent Distribution of the Foreign-Born American Indian and Alaska Native Alone Population by World Region and Country of Birth: 2007

(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey.

**Most of the foreign born who are American Indian and Alaska Native or Some Other Race are from Central America.**

Of the 127,000 foreign born in the American Indian and Alaska Native population, 77 percent were born in countries in Central America (Figure 4). Most were born in Mexico. While the foreign born from Mexico represented 31 percent of the total foreign-born population, they also represented 62 percent of the foreign born who were American Indian and Alaska Native. The additional Central

<sup>9</sup> South America includes the countries of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Falkland Islands, French Guiana, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Central America includes the countries of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Panama.

<sup>10</sup> The estimates for Trinidad and Tobago and Nigeria are not statistically different. The estimates for Ghana and Guyana are not statistically different.



American countries included Guatemala (8.7 percent), El Salvador (3.3 percent), Honduras (2.1 percent), and the remaining Central American countries (1.1 percent).<sup>11</sup> The foreign born from Canada represented 5.4 percent of all foreign born who reported American Indian and Alaska Native.

Of the 8 million foreign born in the Some Other Race population, 81 percent were born in countries in Central America (Figure 5). The foreign born from Mexico represented 65 percent, followed by El Salvador (7.2 percent), Guatemala (4.5 percent), Honduras (2.2 percent), and the remaining Central American countries (1.9 percent). The foreign born from the Dominican Republic composed 5.8 percent of all foreign born who were Some Other Race.

**Overall, about 40 percent of all Hispanics are foreign born, but this proportion varies considerably among specific Hispanic-origin groups.**

About 13 percent of the total population was foreign born. However, the proportion foreign born varies considerably when the population is divided by Hispanic origin and type. While 40 percent of all Hispanics were foreign born, the foreign born composed only about 8 percent of the non-Hispanic population (Figure 6).

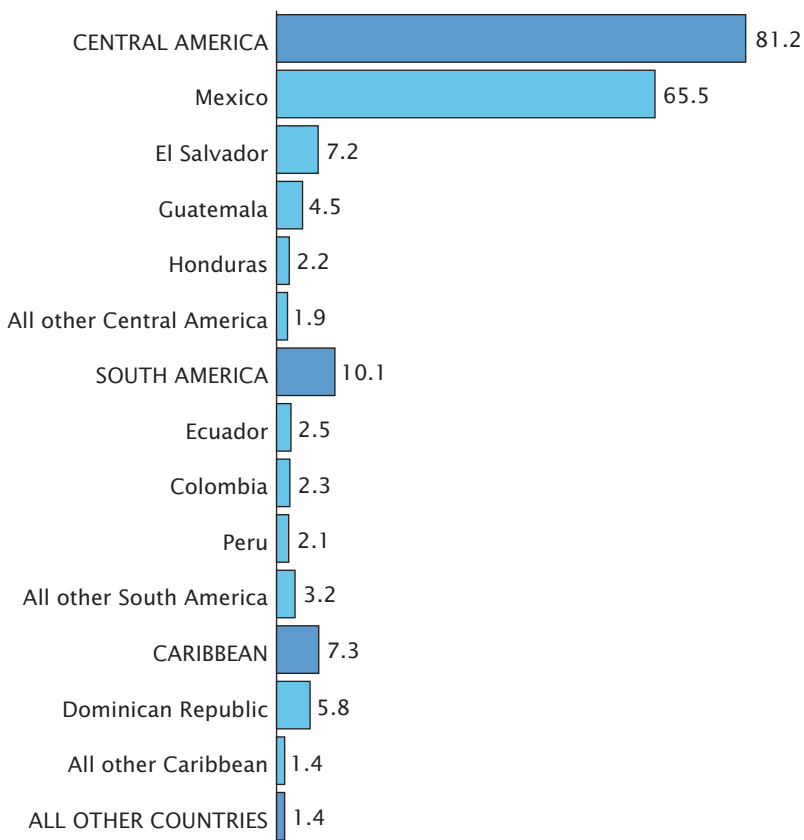
The proportion foreign born among the Hispanic population was heavily influenced by the size and composition of the Mexican-origin population. Of the 45.4 million Hispanics, 64 percent were of Mexican origin. Of the 29.2 million

<sup>11</sup> The estimates for El Salvador and Honduras are not statistically different. The estimates for Honduras and the remaining Central American countries are not statistically different.

Figure 5.

**Percent Distribution of the Foreign-Born Some Other Race Alone Population by World Region and Country of Birth: 2007**

(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey.

Mexican Hispanics, 40 percent were foreign born.

The remaining Central American origins, when combined, represented about 8 percent of the Hispanic population.<sup>12</sup> Although they represent a smaller proportion of all Hispanics, these origin groups have a substantially higher

<sup>12</sup> Central American Hispanics include people with origins in the Spanish-speaking countries of Central America, including Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Panama.

proportion of foreign born than Mexican Hispanics. Overall, 67 percent of the remaining Central American origins were foreign born, ranging from 51 percent for Hispanics of Panamanian origin to 71 percent for Hispanics of Honduran origin. Approximately 6 percent of all Hispanics had South American origins.<sup>13</sup> About 70 percent of

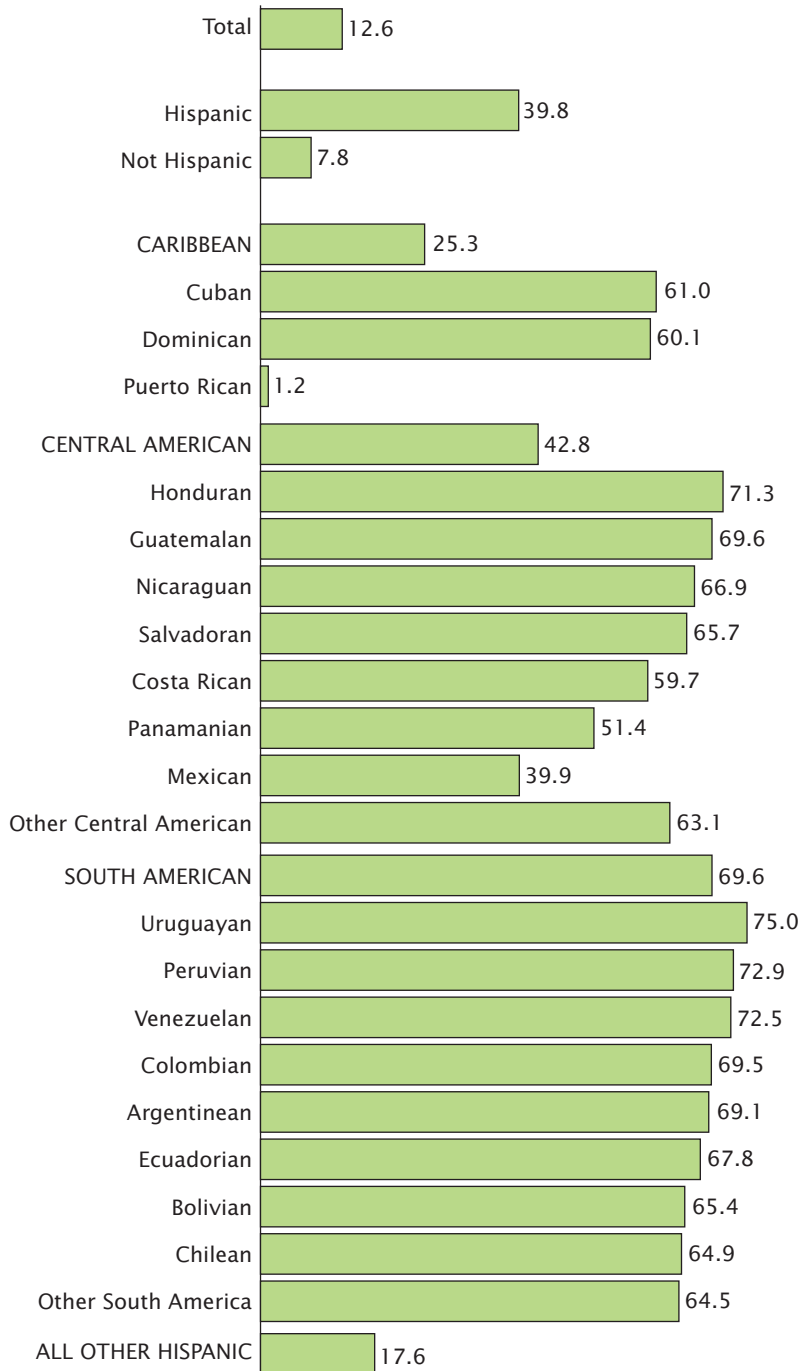
<sup>13</sup> South American Hispanics include people with origins in the Spanish-speaking countries of South America, including Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela.



Figure 6.

### Percent Foreign Born by Hispanic Origin and Type: 2007

(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey.

all Hispanics with South American origins were foreign born, the highest being Uruguayan (75 percent), Peruvian (73 percent), and Venezuelan (73 percent).<sup>14</sup>

Only one-fourth of Hispanics with a Caribbean origin were foreign born.<sup>15</sup> This proportion reflects the size and composition of Hispanics of Puerto Rican origin. Puerto Rican Hispanics composed 59 percent of all Caribbean Hispanics, but less than 2 percent were foreign born. By comparison, 60 percent of Dominican and 61 percent of Cuban Hispanics were foreign born.<sup>16</sup>

### CONCLUSION

In 2007, there were 38.1 million foreign born in the United States, representing about 1 in 8 residents. Most foreign born were White (46 percent), Asian (23 percent), or Some Other Race (21 percent). Relatively few foreign born were Two or More Races. This pattern of race reporting was considerably different from the native born, most of whom reported their race as White (78 percent) or Black (13 percent). The race group with the highest proportion of foreign born was Asian (67 percent), followed by Some Other Race (43 percent), and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (24 percent).

Approximately 80 percent of the foreign-born population were born in Latin America or Asia. Race reporting varies among country-of-birth groups, sometimes greatly. For example, the foreign born from Mexico, which represented the largest foreign-born group, reported

<sup>14</sup> The estimates for Uruguayan, Peruvian, and Venezuelan are not statistically different.

<sup>15</sup> Caribbean Hispanics include people with origins in the Spanish-speaking countries of the Caribbean, including Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic.

<sup>16</sup> The estimates for Dominican and Cuban Hispanics are not statistically different.

either White (53 percent) or Some Other Race (45 percent). By comparison, 87 percent of the foreign born from Cuba reported White, while the majority of the foreign born from Vietnam (99 percent), China (98 percent), Korea (98 percent), the Philippines (97 percent), and India (94 percent) reported Asian.

Just over 18 million, or 47 percent of the foreign-born population, were of Hispanic origin. Most Hispanic foreign born were White (54 percent) or Some Other Race (43 percent). Over three-fourths of all Hispanic foreign born were of Central American origin, of whom 83 percent were Mexican. Of the 45.4 million Hispanics in the United States, 40 percent were foreign born. The proportion foreign born varies among the detailed Hispanic groups. For example, among Hispanics of Mexican origin, 40 percent were foreign born; of Cuban origin, 61 percent; and of Salvadoran origin, 66 percent.

This report reviewed the race and Hispanic origin of the foreign-born population in 2007. As was demonstrated, the foreign born have a pattern of race and Hispanic origin reporting that is very different from the native born. This difference reflects the shift in immigrant source countries over the last 40 years, from predominantly European countries to countries in Latin America and Asia. As both race and Hispanic origin are based on self-identification, this difference may also reflect how the foreign born interpret the concepts of race and ethnicity within the context of the American cultural landscape. It is likely that, in the future, the origins of immigrants may continue to shift and, when combined with changing views of the meaning of race and Hispanic origin, the foreign born

will continue to contribute to the racial and ethnic diversity of the United States.

## **SOURCE OF THE DATA AND ACCURACY OF THE ESTIMATES**

### **The American Community Survey**

Many of the findings presented in this report were based on the American Community Survey (ACS) data collected in 2007. These data were based on the population living in either households or group quarters (which include correctional facilities, nursing homes, college dormitories, group homes, and overnight shelters) that were included in the ACS sample. The U.S. Census Bureau is both the sponsor and the collector of the American Community Survey.

The 2007 ACS is based on a sample of just under 3 million housing unit addresses and a separate sample of just under 200 thousand people living in group quarters. ACS figures are estimates based on this sample and approximate the actual figures that would have been obtained by interviewing the entire household and group quarters populations using the same methodology. The estimates from the 2007 ACS sample may also differ from estimates based on other survey samples of housing units and group quarters and the people living within those housing units and group quarters.

### **The Decennial Census**

Other findings presented in this report that were not derived from the 2007 ACS were collected from previously published findings based on data from each decennial census conducted by the Census Bureau since 1900. Because the structure of the decennial census

has changed over time, some of the data were based on complete censuses (100 percent of the population, from 1900 to 1930) and some were based on sample populations of various sizes (ranging from 5 percent to 20 percent, from 1940 to 2000). In general, the decennial censuses collected data from the population living in households as well as those living in group quarters such as those described above. For more information about the source and accuracy details of the decennial censuses, refer to Working Paper No. 81, "Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-Born Population of the United States: 1850 to 2000," available at [www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0081.html](http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0081.html).

### **Sampling and Nonsampling Error**

Sampling error occurs when the characteristics of a sample are measured instead of those of the entire population (as from a census). Note that sample-based estimates will vary depending on the particular sample selected from the population, but all attempt to approximate the actual figures. Measures of the magnitude of sampling error reflect the variation in the estimates over all possible samples that could have been selected from the population using the same sampling, data collection, and processing methods.

Estimates of the magnitude of sampling errors are provided in the form of margins of error for all key ACS estimates included in this report. The Census Bureau recommends that data users incorporate this information into their analyses, as sampling error in survey estimates could impact the conclusions

drawn from the results. All comparative statements in this report have undergone statistical testing, and comparisons are significant at the 90 percent confidence level unless noted otherwise. This means the 90 percent confidence interval for the difference between the estimates being compared does not include zero.

In addition to sampling error, non-sampling errors may be introduced during any phase of data collection or processing. For example, operations such as editing, reviewing, or keying data from questionnaires may introduce error into the estimates. The primary source of nonsampling error and the processes instituted to control error in the 2007 ACS are described in further detail in the 2007 ACS Accuracy of the Data document (see Web link below).

Title 13, U.S. Code, Section 9, prohibits the Census Bureau from publishing results from which the identity of an individual survey respondent could be determined. For more information on how the Census Bureau protects the confidentiality of data, see the 2007 ACS Accuracy of the Data document,

available at <[www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/ACS/accuracy2007.pdf](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/ACS/accuracy2007.pdf)>.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Further information from the 2007 ACS is available from the American FactFinder on the Census Bureau's Web site, at <[http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?\\_lang=en](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en)>.

A copy of the 2007 ACS questionnaire is available at <[www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/SQuest07.pdf](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/SQuest07.pdf)>.

Definitions of specific terminology used in this report and in the ACS questionnaire are available at <[www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/2007/usedata/Subject\\_Definitions.pdf](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/2007/usedata/Subject_Definitions.pdf)>.

Measures of ACS quality—including sample size and number of interviews, response and nonresponse rates, coverage rates, and item allocation rates—are available at <[www.census.gov/acs/www/UseData/sse/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/UseData/sse/)>.

Additional information about the foreign-born population is available on the Census Bureau's Web site at <[www.census.gov/population](http://www.census.gov/population)

<[www.socdemo/foreign/index.html](http://www.socdemo/foreign/index.html)>. For more information about the Hispanic population, visit <[www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hispanic/hispanic.html](http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hispanic/hispanic.html)>. For more information about the race-alone populations or Two or More Races population, visit <[www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/race/race.html](http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/race/race.html)>.

## CONTACT

For additional information on these topics, please call 1-866-758-1060 (toll free) or visit <[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)>.

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## USER COMMENTS

The Census Bureau welcomes the comments and advice of users of our data and reports. Please send comments and suggestions to:

Chief, Population Division  
U.S. Census Bureau  
Washington, DC 20233-8800

## APPENDIXES

### Appendix A. Race and Hispanic Origin in the American Community Survey

The American Community Survey (ACS) adheres to federal standards for collecting and presenting data on race and Hispanic origin as established by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in 1997. For further information, see *Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity* at

<[www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/1997standards.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/1997standards.html)>.

The OMB requires federal agencies to use a minimum of five race categories: White; Black or African American; American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. For respondents unable to identify

with any of these five race categories, the OMB approved a sixth category—"Some Other Race"—on the ACS questionnaire.

The 2007 ACS question on race includes 15 separate response categories and three areas where respondents can write in a more specific race group. The response

categories and write-in answers can be combined to create the five minimum OMB race categories plus Some Other Race. In addition to White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Some Other Race, seven of the 15 response categories are Asian and four are Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. The Asian response categories include Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Other Asian. The Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander response categories include Native Hawaiian, Guamanian or Chamorro, Samoan, and Other Pacific Islander.

People who responded to the question on race by indicating only one race are referred to as the race *alone* population, or the group that reported *only one* race category. Six

categories make up this population: White alone; Black or African American alone; American Indian and Alaska Native alone; Asian alone; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone; and Some Other Race alone. Individuals who chose more than one of the six race categories are referred to as the *Two or More Races* population, or as the group that reported *more than one* race. The six race alone categories and the Two or More Races category sum to the total population.

The OMB defines Hispanic or Latino as “a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.” In data collection and presentation, federal agencies are required to use a minimum of two ethnicities: “Hispanic or Latino” and “Not Hispanic

or Latino.” The 2007 ACS question on Hispanic origin includes five separate response categories and one area where respondents can write in a specific Hispanic origin group. The Hispanic origin response categories include: No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino; Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano; Yes, Puerto Rican; Yes, Cuban; and Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino. The response categories and write-in answers can be combined to create the two minimum OMB Hispanic origin ethnicities.

For additional information on race and Hispanic origin in the American Community Survey, see *American Community Survey/Puerto Rico Community Survey 2007 Subject Definitions* at <[www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/2007/usedata/Subject\\_Definitions.pdf](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/2007/usedata/Subject_Definitions.pdf)>.

## **Appendix B.**

### **Definition of Race Categories in the American Community Survey**

**White**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as “White” or report entries such as Irish, German, Italian, Lebanese, Near Easterner, Arab, or Polish.

**Black or African American**—A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as “Black or African American” or provide written entries such as African American, Afro-American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian.

**American Indian and Alaska Native**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment. It includes people who indicate their race as “American Indian or Alaska Native”;

who provide either the name of an Indian tribe, such as Iroquois or Sioux, or report entries such as Canadian Indian or Spanish American Indian; or who provide written responses such as Aleut, Yupik, Athabaskan, Tlingit-Haida, or Alaska Indian.

**Asian**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent. It includes people who indicate their race as “Asian Indian,” “Chinese,” “Filipino,” “Japanese,” “Korean,” and “Vietnamese,” or provide written responses such as Hmong, Pakistani, Thai, or Cambodian.

**Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. It includes people who indicate their race as “Native Hawaiian,” “Guamanian or

Chamorro,” “Samoan,” and “Other Pacific Islander,” or provide written responses such as Fijian, Tongan, or Marshallese.

**Some Other Race**—Includes all other responses not included in the “White,” “Black or African American,” “American Indian or Alaska Native,” “Asian,” and “Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander” race categories. Respondents providing write-in entries such as multiracial, mixed, interracial, or a Hispanic/Latino group (for example, Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban) in the “Some Other Race” write-in space are included in this category.

**Two or More Races**—People may have chosen to provide two or more races either by checking two or more race response check boxes, by providing multiple write-in responses, or by some combination of check boxes and write-in responses.

Appendix Table 1.

**Margin of Error for the Population by Nativity, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 2007**

(Numbers in thousands. Data based on sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))

Hispanic origin and race	Total		Native		Foreign born	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>(X)</b>	<b>(X)</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>(X)</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>(X)</b>
One race .....	65	—	123	—	117	—
White .....	105	—	98	—	93	0.2
Black or African American .....	47	—	63	—	43	0.1
American Indian and Alaska Native .....	26	—	23	—	9	—
Asian .....	30	—	30	—	36	0.1
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander .....	11	—	10	—	8	—
Some Other Race .....	115	—	80	—	75	0.2
Two or More Races .....	65	—	57	—	16	—
<b>Not Hispanic</b> .....	<b>9</b>	<b>(X)</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>(X)</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>(X)</b>
One race .....	53	—	95	—	78	0.1
White .....	20	—	61	—	57	0.2
Black or African American .....	44	—	60	—	41	0.2
American Indian and Alaska Native .....	17	—	17	—	3	—
Asian .....	28	—	29	—	36	0.2
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander .....	9	—	9	—	8	—
Some Other Race .....	23	—	17	—	13	0.1
Two or More Races .....	51	—	49	—	11	0.1
<b>Hispanic</b> .....	<b>9</b>	<b>(X)</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>(X)</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>(X)</b>
One race .....	39	0.1	77	0.1	81	0.1
White .....	105	0.2	80	0.3	78	0.4
Black or African American .....	21	—	18	0.1	10	0.1
American Indian and Alaska Native .....	17	—	13	—	8	—
Asian .....	9	—	7	—	4	—
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander .....	5	—	4	—	3	—
Some Other Race .....	116	0.3	80	0.3	75	0.4
Two or More Races .....	38	0.1	33	0.1	12	0.1

(X) Not applicable.

Dash (—) represents zero or rounds to zero.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey.

Appendix Table 2.

### Margin of Error for the Foreign-Born Population by Race for Countries With 750,000 or More Foreign Born: 2007

(Numbers in thousands. Data based on sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90-percent confidence interval. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))

Country of birth	Total	One race							Two or More Races
		Total	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Some Other Race	
<b>NUMBER</b>									
<b>Total</b> . . . . .	<b>119</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>16</b>
Mexico . . . . .	86	88	69	4	7	3	1	65	8
China <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	31	31	3	1	—	31	1	1	2
Philippines . . . . .	28	28	3	1	—	28	1	1	3
India . . . . .	25	25	4	1	1	25	1	5	3
El Salvador . . . . .	27	27	18	2	1	1	—	19	3
Vietnam . . . . .	27	27	2	1	—	26	1	—	1
Korea <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	26	26	2	2	—	26	—	—	2
Cuba . . . . .	24	23	22	4	—	1	—	8	3
Canada . . . . .	17	17	15	3	1	4	1	2	1
Dominican Republic . . .	21	21	10	6	1	1	—	18	4
<b>PERCENT</b>									
<b>Total</b> . . . . .	<b>(X)</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>—</b>
Mexico . . . . .	(X)	0.1	0.4	—	0.1	—	—	0.4	0.1
China <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	(X)	0.1	0.2	0.1	—	0.2	—	—	0.1
Philippines . . . . .	(X)	0.2	0.2	0.1	—	0.3	0.1	—	0.2
India . . . . .	(X)	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.5	—	0.3	0.2
El Salvador . . . . .	(X)	0.3	1.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	—	1.2	0.3
Vietnam . . . . .	(X)	0.1	0.2	0.1	—	0.2	0.1	—	0.1
Korea <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	(X)	0.2	0.2	0.2	—	0.3	—	—	0.2
Cuba . . . . .	(X)	0.3	0.9	0.4	—	0.1	—	0.8	0.3
Canada . . . . .	(X)	0.2	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.2
Dominican Republic . . .	(X)	0.6	1.2	0.8	0.1	0.2	—	1.4	0.6

X Not applicable.

Dash (—) represents zero or rounds to zero.

<sup>1</sup> Includes respondents who reported their county of birth as China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, or Paracel Islands.

<sup>2</sup> Includes respondents who reported their county of birth as Korea, South Korea, or North Korea.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey.

Appendix Table 3.

**Margin of Error for the Hispanic Population by Nativity and Type: 2007**

(Numbers in thousands. Data based on sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/))

Hispanic type	Total		Native		Foreign born	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>(X)</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>(X)</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>(X)</b>
Caribbean .....	58	0.1	49	0.2	29	0.2
Cuban .....	33	0.1	20	0.1	24	0.1
Dominican .....	34	0.1	19	0.1	22	0.1
Puerto Rican .....	46	0.1	46	0.2	4	—
Central American .....	73	0.2	75	0.2	85	0.2
Costa Rican .....	10	—	6	—	7	—
Guatemalan .....	29	0.1	12	—	23	0.1
Honduran .....	23	0.1	9	—	18	0.1
Mexican .....	81	0.2	78	0.2	84	0.3
Nicaraguan .....	17	—	7	—	12	0.1
Panamanian .....	9	—	5	—	6	—
Salvadoran .....	39	0.1	18	0.1	27	0.1
Other Central American .....	9	—	5	—	6	—
South American .....	42	0.1	21	0.1	31	0.2
Argentinean .....	11	—	5	—	9	—
Bolivian .....	9	—	4	—	7	—
Chilean .....	9	—	5	—	7	—
Colombian .....	25	0.1	11	—	21	0.1
Ecuadorian .....	23	0.1	11	—	16	0.1
Peruvian .....	21	—	8	—	17	0.1
Uruguayan .....	7	—	3	—	5	—
Venezuelan .....	12	—	5	—	9	—
Other South American .....	10	—	5	—	7	—
All other Hispanic <sup>1</sup> .....	42	0.1	39	0.1	19	0.1

X Not applicable.

Dash (—) represents zero or rounds to zero.

<sup>1</sup> Other Hispanic includes all other general Hispanic origin responses such as "Hispanic," "Spanish," or Latino."

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey.